(c) the steps Government is taking to help NRIs when they die outside the country especially the people of Andhra Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) to (c) The requisite details are being collected and would be laid on the table of the House.

Indians languishing in jails

498. SHRI K. CHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of Indian nationals are languishing in jails in Gulf countries who are victims of recruitment agencies in the country;

(b) if so, the number of cases reported;

(c) the details of the steps taken for the release of these people; and

(d) the details of steps taken against the fraud agencies and to ensure the safety of the emigrants?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) to (d) As reported by the Indian Missions in the Gulf countries, cases of Indian nationals who are victims of Recruitment Agencies being in jails have not come to their notice.

Computerisation of panchayats

499. SHRIMATI HEMA MALINI: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has recommended for computerization of around 2.5 lakh panchayats during the next three years;

(b) if so, the details of such panchayats and the cost at which it would be implemented, State-wise; and

(c) by when the rural people can expect to avail of computer facility?

THE MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (c) Yes, Madam. The Government has proposed a Centrally Sponsored Scheme for e-governance in Panchayati Raj institutions (e-PRI). The proposed scheme will bring about improved service delivery through the Panchayats and enable greater accountability of government to the community through use of ICT. Department of Information Technology has included e-Governance for Panchayats as a Mission Mode Project (MMP) under National e-Governance Programme (NeGP).

Keeping in view the strategic importance of computerization at the Gram Panchayat level, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj had constituted an Expert Group in June 2007 under the Chairmanship of Director General, National Informatics Centre to assess the current and future Information Technology (IT) programmes of the Ministry, to recommend on the most cost-effective technologies for reaching IT to the Gram Panchayats, the use of IT for effectively building capacities of Panchayati Raj Institutions through distance learning; and the cost